

## **AGENDA ITEM #11**

September 14, 2001

To: Delta Protection Commission

From: Margit Aramburu, Executive Director

Subject: Creation of Resource Conservation and Development Program in the Delta  
(*For possible Commission action*)

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### **PROPOSED ACTION:**

The Commission will review and possibly authorize creation of a Steering Group, with the same membership as the Agriculture Committee (Curtis, Ferguson, Nottoli, Shaffer, van Loben Sels, Wilson), to meet and confer with interested parties in the Delta (counties, land trusts, resource conservation districts) regarding submitting an application to the federal Secretary of Agriculture to authorize and fund an RC&D in the Delta area.

The Steering Group would report back to the Commission with a final recommendation, and if appropriate the final application package and request for creation of an RC&D program in the Delta area.

The Agriculture Committee reviewed this issue; a second review (September 11, 2001) was cancelled.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The purpose of the RC&D is to develop and implement regionally-specific policies and programs associated with economic and social issues of rural communities and agricultural land use. The San Joaquin County Resource Conservation District has recommended formation of a Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Program in the Delta to protect and enhance agriculture. This is a federal program, funded by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

NRCS staff briefed the Agriculture Committee at its meeting in August and presented a video on RC&D programs. The Agriculture Committee felt the program would complement the program of the Delta Protection Commission, and would provide additional resources to assist in development of policies and programs associated with economic and social issues of rural communities and agricultural land use.

The area to be included in the program can be of any size and configuration, such as the Delta Primary Zone. A sponsor can be a regional planning body, such as the Delta Protection Commission, or a nonprofit body. A sponsor forms a steering committee to request formation, then later a council for implementation. USDA provides support (staffing) to the council.

The programs are locally developed and can address land conservation, water management, environmental enhancement, community development, or something unique to a particular area.